

真の仲間じゃないと勇者の
パーティーを追い出されたので、

Banished from the brave man's group,
I decided to lead a slow life in the back
country.2

辺境でスローライフ

することになりました2

ざっぽん

illust. やすき

I Was Kicked out of the Hero's Party
Because I Wasn't a True Companion so I
Decided to Have a Slow Life at the Frontier

Arc 2: Hero Ruti is here

by Zappon

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Chapter 47: Red and Lit have stew

Zoltan was surrounded by a vast expanse of grasslands.

During this season, the farmers from the north district typically head outside the two meter high ramparts, or more like a stone wall, that surrounds Zoltan to mow grass from the outer grasslands to collect feed for their livestock in preparation for winter.

The people from Downtown want animal feed too so there were many participants.

Poor adventurers below D-rank also participate as a side-job. The frequency was low but they were in charge of exterminating monsters whenever they appear. The rewards for the job was low but they could receive food such as vegetables and wheat flour from the farmers.

They could easily earn a living by gathering medicinal herbs but the nature of this job meant that they would be surrounded by companions and would be carried to town immediately if they suffer any serious injuries. To them, it was important that there would almost not be any need to put their lives on the line.

The collected grass would be piled up in the north district warehouse to become hay and sold at a reasonable price once winter came.

“It’ll be winter soon.”

The sky was clear and sunny.

The temperature was slightly chilly.

I wore a coat over the usual shirt I wore.

With my left hand kept in my pocket, I was on my way back to the shop hugging with my right hand a package containing a large number of potatoes and cheese as well as chestnuts as a bonus that I received from the farmers in exchange for medicine.

“It’s still warm compared to Logavia.”

Lit said as she plunged her hand into my coat pocket as well.

She held my left hand tight to warm her slightly chilly hand.

“Didn’t you just comment that it was still warm?”

“Winter is still winter.”

Perhaps she was slightly embarrassed as Lit lifted the bandana wrapped around her neck up slightly to cover her mouth.

When I gripped her hand back tightly, I discovered through the gap of her bandana that Lit was grinning.

It was somewhat cute so I ended up grinning too.

“Ah, Red is grinning.”

And so Lit made fun of me.

How unreasonable.



We returned to the shop just before noon.

It was still too early for lunch.

Lit took three tins of 10-liter milk out from her item box that she received from the farmers similarly by exchanging medicine.

You might think that it would have been fine for me to store the potatoes in the item box too but although the item box would recognize the milk kept inside the tins, it would not recognize the bag the potatoes were kept in and will store the bag and the potatoes in separate alternate spaces.

Then, I would have to image them separately when I want to take them out, with no choice but to take the potatoes and cheeses out one-by-one.

And I would have to memorize every single different kind of vegetable when putting them in so it was quite an arduous task and keeping them in a bag and carrying by hand was a lot faster.

“The milk will go bad if we don’t use it quickly.”

“Shall we exchange one tin with other food in the market?”

“Good idea, I’ll pop by for a bit.”

“Can I come along?”

“Of course.”

Now then, if there was another person around, they would have had this question.

Who would watch the shop if the two of us went together?

... Autumn was ending after all so it can’t be helped that the two of us wanted to have a stroll together!

Gonz would probably hold his belly and laugh if he heard it.

But only Lit and I were there.

I plan to live an irrational fun life to the fullest.

I grabbed a bag with common copper coins in it and set off once again together with Lit.



When we reached the market, Zoltan’s summer languidness had completely passed as shop owners wearing slightly thicker clothes were raising their voices to promote their products.

“Now what should we exchange it for.”

In the cities of the Avalon Continent, coin purchase of goods was practiced but there were still many who barter for goods.

The common copper coin with a low value equivalent to 0.01 Peryl was fundamentally used as a supplementary coin when bartering goods.

Previously, even in Newman’s clinic, there was an old lady who paid the treatment cost using meat and common copper coins too so it was a common sight on this continent.

I heard that the money economy of the Dark Continent was advancing. Their copper coin was about the size of a pinky and unlike our common copper coins

where there are even privately-made copper coins mixed in, they apparently engrave their copper coins.

Even in the Avalon Continent, their coins are high quality with a low price so there are also countries that import the Dark Continent-minted coins to use as their own country's coin.

If a person plans to travel to the Dark Continent, they can exchange money at such countries.

The price of milk in Zoltan was slightly high.

Because it was better to rear milking cows in a slightly cooler environment.

It was probably 20% more expensive compared to other regions.

Normally it would cost about 5 Peryl for 10 liters but in Zoltan, it would cost 6 Peryl.

6 Peryl was equivalent to the living expenses for six days. Instead of exchanging it in a single shop, we would probably be exchanging it for food ingredients one after another.

Or for some expensive food material that is not normally sold.

In comparison, beef was slightly cheaper compared to milk.

The farmers commented that Zoltan had a suitable environment for meat cow animal husbandry.

However, compared to the price of beef in the central region, it was not cheaper by even 10%. It sold for 95% of the price in the central region, about 4.5 Peryl for 1 kilogram.

It wasn't really agreeable.

"Isn't it the season for stew soon?"

"Stew huh, then, shall we buy some sausages and I'll make pot-au-feu?"

"Can't we add beef in directly? I like stewed meat!"

"That works too, beef stew it is then. The vegetables will be onion, cabbage, turnip, and leek. The appetizer will be marinated fish. Fried chicken to go with the stew. After finishing the stew, we can add pasta and let it simmer. The

dessert will be fruit yogurt.”

“Wow, that’s luxurious! But is it all right? For such a day without any occasions?”

Lit’s eyes were sparkling from my words but she asked with her head slightly tilted.

I smiled to dodge the question.

It was too embarrassingly hard to admit that I was happy and over-enthusiastic because Lit made a dish request.



“It’s done~”

“Yay~”

I placed the stew on the table we set in the living room.

After that, I set a small lit charcoal stand on the table.

The fire wasn’t very strong but the heat radiation from the charcoal caused the stew to emit bubbling sounds.

“Let’s eat.”

“Yup.”

She had eaten most of the marinated fish while waiting for the stew.

I kind of felt that she ate a little too much even though it was meant to be an appetizer but it seemed that it was a needless worry on my part when I placed the stew in front of her.

We had fun conversations while we picked at the stew.

“This chicken dumpling is delicious too.”

“Yeah, I ended up buying it after the butcher strongly recommended it for the leftover amount of common copper coins I had but it certainly matches his recommendation. I will have to thank that butcher.”

After we finished eating, I added pasta and left it to simmer.

The soup pasta that soaked up the taste of the ingredients was delicious as

well.

The after meal dessert was yogurt with cut grapes and bananas.

Seeing the sweet-tooth Lit happily eating it made me want to ask if she wanted my share too.

Well, I ate my own share too though. I love sweet stuff too.

“Thank you for the meal!”

After we both finished eating, Lit had a satisfied smile on her face.

I felt from the bottom of my heart that the effort put into making today’s luxurious meal was worth it just by seeing that smile.

Chapter 48: The assassin gets a new job

We properly manned the shop from the afternoon.

Lit took care of the storefront while I went to compound medicine in the workshop. Today I was making antidotes.

The production of the Devil's Divine Protection had stopped but it was doubtful if the authorities had seized all the remaining drugs.

Furthermore, from then on, we would have to treat the withdrawal symptoms of the drug.

I guess there was a need for a medicine to reduce the withdrawal symptoms too.

"I might as well mass produce Cure Poison Potions."

Drug poisoning was treated as the effect of magically-induced poisoning.

If Cure Poison was used, it would immediately treat not only the mental addiction but even the addiction symptoms in the body.

However, the difficulty was that Cure Poison Potions were extremely expensive at 300 Peryl a bottle so it was a medicine that only rich adventurers, merchants or aristocrats could lay their hands on.

"Hopefully the symptoms can be coped with using antidotes made from brewed medicinal grass."

Cure Poison Potions were Magic Potions made by containing spells in them. It was not something I, who can't use magic, could make.

However, the antidotes made using medicinal grass could only ease the symptoms a little. In apothecary, drug addiction was different from poison.

Although I could sell them at a cheap price by using the Multiplying Potion to convert one potion into five potions ...

"If only I had a tight-lipped, trustworthy cooperator who has the authority to distribute it."

My acquaintances in Zoltan tend to be middle to lower-class citizens in Downtown.

My connections were non-existent.

“Well, I’ll discuss it with Lit and I guess I’ll give up if that is no good too.”

People probably won’t die even if they don’t have the Cure Poison Potions.

However, the problem was that the Holy Church would question their blasphemous act of taking the Devil’s Divine Protection so the church that normally treats and isolates drug addicts would not actively do so for this incident.

There was a need for a partner to nurse the patients suffering from withdrawal symptoms until they can be off the medications. Zoltan had multiple clinics but they did not have the capacity for treatment of hospitalized patients.

At most they could mainly treat the patients who come to the clinic and only give them a short hospitalization duration before they are sent home to recover.

“Regardless, they are all problems that are too large for me to handle.”

I ended up having a lot of thoughts but it wasn’t a problem that I could draw any conclusions.

I’ll just do my best within the realm of my apothecary.



In the evening, after I finished compounding, I dropped by the shop to check and found Lit greeting customers with a smile.

It seemed that the shop was quite busy.

“Due to the riots at South Marsh, medicines for emergencies ... like the hemostatic agents are selling very well. Also, the Guards bought quite a number of hangover medications. I sold quite a few Cure Potions too.”

The Cure Potions I was selling in the shop were from the requests I put up to the Downtown adventurers to cooperate to contain spells inside the potions I made. The total hours spent working on it plus the part-time wage adds up to

13 Peryl.

To the fledgling adventurers, the total working hours were long but it was an easy request where they could earn money just by using magic so it was a popular request.

“Ooo, that’s amazing, isn’t this a record high sales?”

“I think it should rank number one or two. Even though the shop was closed until the afternoon. Moreover, various clinics apparently don’t have enough medicine so I believe the orders will come in from tomorrow onwards.”

Lit passed me a note of today’s sales.

I took a quick look at it and we certainly did sell a great deal.

“In this case, I better compound more medicine. Furthermore, at this rate, I would run out of the medicinal grass I use as materials. I’ll head to the mountains to gather medicinal grass tomorrow so I guess I’ll put in more work to compound a little more today.”

“It might be better if we leave the shop open until the customer traffic recedes too.”

“We’ll be working a little overtime though. Can I leave it to you?”

“Sure! It seems that there have been customers that don’t normally buy medicine from us so it’s the time to let them know of the high-quality medicine sold at Red & Lit’s Apothecary.”

I wonder if they could be deemed as high-quality but I was confident that there were no failing-grade medicines.

There have not been any claims from customers and even though there was no chance of winning against the value of medicine sold by shops where the medicines were made using the Intermediate Compounding skill or by shop owners who possess Divine Protections that can use magic, the people who use medicine are not those who would seek such high-quality goods.

“Could I have this cold medicine please!”

A young Half-Elf girl paid 10 common copper coins and asked with a lively voice.

It was a medicine made using ginger that would raise the body's metabolism and was not a medicine that would show immediate effects unlike medicine made using skills but ... this kind of medicine was needed too.

"Be careful not to drop it okay."

Lit smiled gently and passed her the bottle with the medicine in it.

"Thank you very much! Mother looked like she was suffering from the cold!"

"I think your mother will definitely be happy."

The young girl lowered her head and left the shop with light footsteps.



My name is Tise. I am an Assassin but now I am probably a flying ship pilot.

"At this rate, we should reach by tomorrow."

Night had fallen so we landed in a forest a distance away from the highway in order for me to rest.

I was currently explaining the route to Hero-sama with a map spread open.

"I see."

Hero-sama silently listened to my words as I traced the route on the map.

She occasionally looked in my direction and twitched her cheek but I end up getting startled thinking I did something to anger her.

Ugeuge-san was tapping my shoulder telling me it was all right and cheering me on.

Yup, I will do my best.

Hii!? Hero-sama twitched her cheek again! She keeps staring in my direction!!

It's fine, keep calm, keep calm ...

"Tomorrow, land at this point."

Hero-sama pointed at the map.

It was close to a mountain about a day's walk from Zoltan.

"Here? That would be quite a distance from Zoltan though?"

“The flying ship would stand out. In Zoltan, I wish to hide the fact that I am the Hero. You should treat me as a regular traveler too.”

Ehhhhhh? No way no way no way!!

No, I didn't mind landing the flying ship at a distant location and neither did I mind walking from there!

But it's impossibly impossible for Hero-sama to pretend to be an ordinary person!

After all, I break out in cold sweat just by standing beside her! And my back becomes all drenched! And I have to wash my underwear every night!

A person who emits such overwhelmingly strong aura can only be either the Hero or the Demon Lord!

Although I have never met the Demon Lord before.

“Is that so? Sorry for being rude but Hero-sama isn't really familiar with being an ordinary traveler.”

“You are right. I have always lived as a Hero. That's why, if I can't pretend to be a traveler well, I hope that you could cover for me.”

Seriously —

“I do not know if I can serve as Hero-sama's guide. I am nothing more than a vile Assassin.”

“That does not matter. Even now, you have pointed out that I am not familiar with being a traveler.”

So I was evaluated on that point huh ... but I feel that anybody could have pointed that out ...

But I was afraid to object any more so I guess I have no choice but to give up. It is the job of an Assassin to answer to the wishes of their employer as much as possible.

I have received training to blend into the crowd and if Hero-sama ... it's probably impossible. But I can't say that. For now, I'll just nod and survive today.

It is also an important ability of Assassin to survive difficult situations.

“Well then, that’s all for tomorrow’s plan. You can get some rest. I will act as the lookout.”

Hero-sama said as she went out on to the deck.

I am Tise. Assassin and Flying ship Pilot but now I act as the cover for Hero-sama dressed as a traveler.

I would never have thought that I would end up like this when I was still an Assassin.

It’s true.



In the middle of the night, as a person was washing their sweaty underwear, she detected the presence of Hero-sama pacing about as if looking for something for some reason.

She tried to listen carefully.

” ... Not here.”

She heard a somewhat disappointed voice.

Not here? Of course, we are the only people on the flying ship so obviously nobody else would be around.

What was she doing?

“?”

Ugeuge-san also tilted its head in doubt.

Chapter 49: Missing each other just by a hair's breadth

Early in the morning, I completed my preparations to head to the mountains.

"I'll be going then."

"Have a safe trip, here, your bento."

"Thanks."

Incidentally, 90% of that bento was made by me. Lit only made the burnt fried egg that was crispy on both sides.

Early this morning, she suddenly came to the kitchen and said that she wanted to experience the situation of handing a bento to me as I leave.

She said that just handing it to me would be insufficient so she wanted to make just one item and ended up making just the fried egg.

"Mufu—"

Lit seemed to be satisfied, having passed the bento to me.

As I head to the mountains, the knight was still in the middle of the bridge and seemed to be obstructing the people who wish to cross the bridge.

It seemed troublesome so I took the detour as I did before.

Does that knight have a lot of time on his hands?

☆☆

No, I don't want to do it.

In front of my eyes was a drainage channel with the wastewater from the village daily use as well as filth and even trash tossed into it.

Floating in it was a deformed wood carving of a Wyvern toy that was tangled in the trash.

"Uaaaaaaaaan!!"

A boy was crying as he pointed at the toy floating in the drainage channel.

He probably dropped it.

A stench that could warp a person's nose was coming from the drainage channel and there were incomprehensible sediments that would cause people to avert their eyes from the discomfort.

It would be possible to endure it if I gave up and went somewhere else but the child continued to cry and would not leave that place.

Perhaps the child knew about my special characteristic. Maybe his tears were a calculated action.

I thought to myself and once the seed of doubt sprouted in my heart, the hatred that could not be released started burning at my heart.

I am a Hero. A Hero cannot forsake people in need.

Even if I am younger than that boy.

Even if I am only here for leisure.

Even if I previously dirtied my clothes in a similar situation and mother beat me and warned me to never do it again.

The Divine Protection does not care about my personal circumstances.

I can't endure it any longer, I will leap into that, wade through the filth and ruin my entire day for the sake of a toy that was not even worth a single copper coin.

I helplessly took a step toward the drainage channel ... and a hand grabbed my shoulder.

"Leave it to me."

That person leaped into the drainage channel without any hesitation.

While frowning from being submerged in filthy water up until the waist, that person approached the toy with powerful steps, grabbed it and returned.

"Here, don't drop it again, and it is dirty so remember to wash it.

"Thank you Gideon-oniichan!"

The child who was crying just now smiled happily and ran away holding the

dirtied toy.

“Fuuu ...”

That person looked at his own terrible state and gave a bitter smile.

As I tried to approach him, he stopped me in a hurry.

“You’ll get dirty.”

” ... Onii-chan.”

That person was my one and only Onii-chan.

“Sorry.”

“Why are you apologizing? Ruti has not done anything wrong.”

“But ...”

“I did it because I wanted to. So don’t worry about it.”

“Okay ... Onii-chan?”

“Yes?”

“I’m sorry, I can’t do it after all.”

I hugged Onii-chan without worrying about dirtying my clothes.

He initially tried to push me away but after realizing that I was crying, he seemed to have resigned himself and let me remain as I was.

“Let go get our clothes cleaned together.”

“Yup.”

I’m sure the true hero actually refers to people like Onii-chan.

Not a person like me who was forced to do it but a person who would leap into the drainage channel of their own free will.

I aimed to subjugate the Demon Lord, setting a huge goal to resolve the issue that causes the most number of people to suffer because I would then not have to bother myself with helping such minute cases.

In actual fact, I did not care about the fate of the world or what not.



The Hero Ruti and Tise were walking on the highway that led to Zoltan.

Ruti was not wearing her usual armor. She did not have the Holy Sword of Demon Vanquishing on her waist too.

When Tise told her that it would draw too much attention, the Hero obediently stored her equipment in her item bag and disappeared somewhere for about 10 minutes.

Tise waited as she wondered where she went when Ruti returned while holding a sword.

“I sensed the presence of goblins nearby so I went to get their equipment.”

“Is that a Goblin Sword?”

A Goblin Sword with three holes drilled into it.

It seemed like it would break at any moment just by swinging it.

“Well, they won’t know if it’s kept in the sheath. Let’s go.”

Nevertheless, that slightly dirty sheath and handle seemed to match something a traveler would have so Tise gave her permission.

“Okay.”

The Hero smiled happily at having her own thoughts accepted by Tise but the smile was so faint that Tise did not notice it and the two of them departed from the flying ship.

Zoltan’s grassland undulated as the wind blew.

The forest that Ruti and the others were in previously had already finished its preparations for winter but Zoltan’s grasslands were still in the midst of changing from green to brown so it was a strange phenomenon.

“But it is warmer here.”

Tise said.

Ugeuge-san didn’t seem to like the cold that much so it was happy that they came here.

It hopped about inside the small pouch that Tise hung on her waist.

“Is that so?”

Ruti answered expressionlessly.

With her Environmental Resistance, the cold was nothing more than information on the temperature to Ruti.

Even the blistering cold of the far north and the scorching heat of the desert would not impede Ruti in any way.

At the same time, the taste of the delicious warm milk Gideon made for Ruti during winter was lost to her as well.

That was a regret that remained in Ruti’s heart.

After walking for a while, there was a crowd of people.

“What happened? I’ll go have a look.”

Tise slipped through the crowd with her petite body and quickly returned.

“A Knight is blocking the bridge. It seemed that Adventurers who had confidence in their skills had challenged him but they had the tables turned on them. It might be a slight detour but there is an alternate path, shall we proceed along it?”

“No, we will pass through here.”

Ruti headed straight into the crowd.

“Move.”

“Hey miss, it’s dangerous, there’s a strange Knight ...”

The man who called out to her spoke mid-sentence before he noticed his trembling feet.

“Oh, oooh”

The man instinctively moved aside.

The others saw his state and naturally moved aside so as to not block Ruti’s path.

After Ruti passed by, they finally realized that they were frightened.

There was a Knight wearing armor on the bridge with a spear that had a cloth

wrapped around its tip as if signifying that he would not kill his opponents.

The Knight was a large man close to 2 meters in height.

“Toll fee. Pay 100 Peryl if you wish to pass through here.”

The man said.

Ruti tilted her head.

“Why?”

“Why? Because I want to.”

“I see, then there’s no need to pay.”

Ruti walked straight toward the Knight’s position and did not show any signs of drawing her sword.

“Yo-you, what exactly ...”

Despite everything, the Knight could not figure out the girl closing in on him.

He could only imagine himself getting killed no matter what he did.

As she watched his reaction, Tise imagined that the Knight would soon throw down his weapon to surrender.

However.

“Uoooooooo!!!”

The Knight screamed with fighting spirit, took a large step forward and released a sharp thrust.

“... Eh?”

Tise uttered a strange sound, having not understood what the Knight was thinking.

Ruti very easily grabbed the spear, that was supposed to have been thrust at her at high speed, with her right hand.

Even though it seemed as though she was just holding it casually with a single arm, the Knight could not move the spear at all no matter how much strength he used.

“Hindrance.”

Ruti muttered softly and raised the spear along with the Knight.

The giant Knight floated and flew through the air.

“Ooooooh!?!?!”

Having been tossed aside by Ruti, the Knight passed over the parapet and dropped into the river.

“Tise, let’s go.”

“Ye-yes.”

Even though she wanted to act like travelers, what can they do after suddenly winning so prominently? Tise hugged her head as she chased after the back of the Hero.

Chapter 50: Bandit Knight that was washed up on a stream

As I was walking, I somewhat heard somebody groaning.

I suspiciously walked toward the source of that sound.

“Uu ... cold.”

I saw a huge man shivering while seated next to a bonfire.

The man was in only his underwear and his clothes were drying on a nearby tree branch.

“I almost drowned and I had to take off my armor in the middle of the river, the full plate was expensive though.”

The man muttered with teary eyes as he snapped a branch in two and tossed it into the bonfire.

All right, I'll assume I didn't see anything.

Just as I turned to the right to leave that place ...

“Wait! That person there, wait!”

Geh, he saw me.

The man noisily approached me.

It seemed like a sign of trouble so I wanted to escape but I guess it won't be good if I ran away without saying anything.

“Ah, is there anything?”

I subtly hinted with an aura that I honestly found it annoying as I answered with a friendly smile.

“Umu, I am the Drake Rider Otto. The raid leader of the glorious Knights of Fafnir.”

“Drake Rider?”

『Drake Rider』 was a Superior Divine Protection in the Calvary system and just as the name implied, they bond with Drakes and was a Divine Protection that specialized in fighting while riding on Drakes.

If compared against the similar but more common Divine Protection 『Wyvern Rider』 that rode on Wyverns, the 『Drake Rider』 was fundamentally stronger.

There were various reasons but the number one reason was that the 『Drake Rider』 had the ‘Human-Drake Unity’ skill which allowed them to bestow the skills they possess to the Drake they were riding on.

Naturally, Drakes have their own Divine Protection as well so by gaining two Divine Protections, they would be able to overwhelm opponents of the same Divine Protection level as them.

However, that did not mean that the 『Drake Rider』 was a ‘strong’ Divine Protection.

Drake Riders had one fatal shortcoming.

A Drake Rider can only bond with a single Drake in his lifetime.

Even if they have numerous powerful skills, once they lose that single Drake, they would never get another chance. Once that happens, the remaining skills brought about by their Divine Protection would become that of the lower-grade 『Cavalry』 Divine Protection and, because of the allocation of skills toward bonding with Drakes, they would be inferior to Cavalry of the same level.

Because of that ...

” ... And that was how the monstrous giant Glendale lost his compatible trusted partner.”

That was often used in the past for heroic tales of those from the strong Divine Protection systems.

That was to say, even without losing the skills from Drake Rider, they could not be used once their partner was lost.

“Ah, what? Knights of Fafnir?”

The Blacksmith Mogurim once mentioned that name.

I had not heard of it before but was it trending at the moment?

“Yes, the Knights of Fafnir! People living in the remote border of Zoltan might not be familiar but apart from the honorable Knights of Bahamut and the ruthless Knights of Tiamat, the third Knight Order that everyone in the Imperial Capital knows about is the Knights of Fafnir! I was active as a Drake Rider there.”

“I don’t know about it.”

“It can’t be helped that you are ignorant of the common knowledge in Central when living in the countryside like Zoltan. It’s nothing to be ashamed about.”

He comforted me by patting my shoulder.

I stared at the man called Otto with reproachful eyes.

I was once the Vice Captain of that Knights of Bahamut after all.

“So, what does Knight-sama want? I am in a hurry after all.”

“Right! I have a request.”

“Request?”

“I, in order to subjugate the Hill Giant Dandak, obtain his castle and become a noble who possess territory, came to Zoltan.”

I heard that before.

Three years ago, five Hill Giants attacked and took over the castle of the lord situation northwest to Zoltan.

Zoltan sent a subjugation party once but they were routed and since the nobles who owned that land were all killed by the giants, it has been neglected all this time.

Occasionally, reckless adventurers who dream of owning a castle challenge them and they never return but it doesn’t cause any particular problems.

“Hmm~, I see. Good luck, bye.”

“Wait wait wait, listen to the end.”

Otto hurriedly stopped me as I was about to leave.

“In order to look for martial artists who could fight against giants, I challenged the people crossing the bridge.”

“Ah, so you are that troublesome Knight.”

“And then, today, I finally encountered a female warrior who possesses equal strength as I do. That was fate and I shall find that female warrior, defeat the evil Hill Giants together and obtain the castle!”

Otto became embarrassed after saying so much.

“And I shall propose to that female warrior and live in that castle together.”

“Ah, I see, good luck.”

“Wait wait wait, just a little more, next is the main topic.”

Otto hurriedly stopped me once again as I was about to leave.

I’d like it if he hurried up and gave up.

“So what exactly do you want me to do.”

“No, it isn’t anything major.”

He was acting bashfully.

A giant man over two meters tall acting like that was nothing less than disgusting though.

“When I was tossed into the river, my weapon, armor, luggage, and money was washed away ... so I would like to borrow money. I will return it to you after I obtain the castle.”

“No.”

I naturally answered immediately.

“Even if I lower my head?”

“Yup.”

“Then there’s no other way! I will have you leave your money even if I have to use force!”

Otto exclaimed as he opened both his arms and attacked. In only his underwear.

“If you don’t want to feel pain, obediently buheraaaaaa!?”

Before he knew it, my right straight with the force of my entire body behind it slammed into Otto’s face.

Hah, that’s bad, I reflexively retaliated. I didn’t want to fight because I didn’t want to stand out but in actual fact, I guess I was instinctively irritated.

Otto flew backward and caused a large splash of water as he once again fell into the river.

Otto’s body floated up onto the surface of the water and was taken down the river by the current.

That guy was a bandit so it doesn’t matter, I guess I’ll hurry on forward.

Chapter 51: Oden and mustard and chikuwa

Zoltan's autumn was short.

Although my frequency of coming to the mountain to harvest medicinal grass had decreased, I did not have any time to feel the season of autumn in the mountain before the leaves dropped and it transformed into a winter mountain that gave a sense of loneliness.

“Even though the snow has not accumulated, the number of medicinal herbs I can gather will be limited as it is winter.”

While it was winter, polyp mushrooms used to make the medicine for Choleric Cold, snow stalks that were effective for wounds infected by Night Soil Fever and gray starfish grass could still be harvested.

However, it was painful that the henbane grass used for hemostatic agents and disinfectants as well as the koku leaves used for antidotes, materials for high demand medicine, could not be harvested.

I must harvest those two medicinal grass as much as possible today while it was still barely within the time frame to be able to harvest them.

“I want to build a greenhouse and be able to secure a supply of them to some extent even during winter.”

I'll have a discussion with Gonz once I return.

For now, I'll focus on harvesting medicinal grass.

I wished the Chimeras would help out since they were already watching me.

When I turned my gaze toward the Chimeras that were staring at me from far away, they anxiously fled.



I am Tise. In the past, I used to be an assassin but now, I am just a person wrapping my arms around my head in worry.

The reason was naturally Hero-sama.

“I am just a traveler, not anybody suspicious.”

Hero-sama explained to Zoltan’s gatekeeper.

That was not bad, not bad at all but.

Hero-sama was carrying a Greater Giant Frog which weighed over 500 kilograms.

Why?

Only 10 minutes have passed since I started explaining to the gatekeeper our fictitious circumstances as I bribed him.

Not more than 15 minutes had passed no matter how I look at it.

Even though I mentioned that I would do the talking so all Hero-sama had to do was wait quietly.

“Er, erm, Ruru-san.”

Ruru was Hero-sama’s fake name we would be using in town.

Incidentally, I was Tifa.

Our setting was that we were looking for our missing father.

Although we didn’t know much about the Alchemist man Hero-sama was searching for, if we were going to be looking for a man, I figured it would probably be better if we made our setting as looking for a family member. We won’t encounter any future problems as we could just brush it off as a case of mistaken identity.

Anyway, the problem was the situation in front of me right now.

“What is with the frog on your back?”

“It was hibernating in the ground nearby and I thought it would be a danger once summer came so I subjugated it.”

“O-okay, I understand. But why are you carrying it?”

“?”

“No, don’t tilt your head there.”

“Animals and beast-type monsters defeated near towns should be carried to

the town's trading post."

No, well, that is true, but!

The gatekeeper tapped my shoulder.

I stiffly turned around, to the point that I could imagine I was making creaking noises, and then, I saw the gatekeeper's surprised look with sparkling eyes.

"Your companion is amazing. I'll call the butcher to bring a wagon so please wait here for a while."

Hero-sama did not seem to mind and was staying aloof from the praises and curious gazes from the surroundings For now,

"Ruru-san, the gatekeeper will bring a wagon from the butcher so you can lower the frog down."

"I see."

The frog was lowered to the ground with a loud slam.

Ah, I'm sure that with this, we would be the talk of the town.

There was no longer an option for covert operations ...

☆☆

The nights in the mountain were cold during this season.

I trembled as I covered myself with the sleeping bag.

The bonfire crackled as it burned.

I hugged a hot water bottle that I had heated up.

"It's cold."

The mountain was close to The End of the World so the wind that blew down from the large mountain range was chilled to a great extent.

On days where the winds were strong, we could feel cold that was unimaginable in a subtropical region like Zoltan and sometimes the winds from the mountain might even carry with it snow.

Those were only carried over by the wind so it would not pile up but it was still cold nonetheless.

“I miss my bed.”

I didn't use to miss home that much in the past.

I even thought of building a small hut here in the mountain.

Thinking that staying two to three nights in the mountain would increase the efficiency of my medicinal grass harvest.

But I no longer do now.

I want to return home as soon as possible.

“I see, I guess that means I have found a place to return to here.”

I fell asleep while thinking about the home where Lit was waiting for me.



The next day, I gathered medicinal grass in the mountain as well and descended down the mountain when it became dark.

I ran home at full speed when nobody could see.

I returned to Zoltan after sprinting on the road at night at full speed.

“Hey~”

The gatekeeper looked back just as he was about to close the gate when I shouted.

“Why isn't it Red, you're back from harvesting medicinal grass?”

“Yup, please let me in.”

“So troublesome, just jump over the wall over there.”

“No way, that's too troublesome.”

The gatekeeper complained lightly as he delayed the closing of the gate slightly.

Zoltan's city walls were only two meter high stone walls.

Anybody could easily climb over it if they wanted to.

It was a tacit agreement to turn a blind eye to the adventurers who missed the curfew that return by secretly climbing over the wall.

It would be a huge issue in other cities but such cases were just laughed off in Zoltan.

“That was close.”

“Red, you are seriously good at barely making it in time.”

“I’m diligent after all.”

“If you’re diligent then come back with some time to spare! By the way, I’m done for the day so want to have a cup after this?”

“Ah~ Sorry. I’m going home.”

“Ka~ So unfriendly, you’re better at getting a bride than me huh?”

“Of course.”

“Don’t say that with such a straight face ... fine, how about just one cup?”

“Ah — well, I have not drunk all this while so all right, we’ll grab one cup from the food stand.”

It was important to catch up with friends too.

Although I did not intend to stay out late.

Leaving the castle walls, we entered the 「Oden」 food stand that was always open at the boundary of the harbor district and Downtown.

“Welcome.”

Working there was ... not a dirty old man ... but a sleek-styled High-Elf with silver blonde hair bundled into a ponytail.

When the old man was grumbling that he was well into his years and it was about time he shut down the stand, this Oparara said ‘It would be a waste to close down this stand, in that case, I shall succeed it!’.

The rugged-faced old man was extremely weak to beautiful people and although he refused for about 30 seconds, he lost to Oparara’s enthusiasm and from then on, the two of them worked the food stand but now, Oparara opens the stand alone most of the time.

The race of High-Elf possess the country called the Kiramine Kingdom and it

was currently the only other Kingdom in the Avalon Continent that officially crowns a king apart from the human race.

The Dwarves living in Sir Beard Mountain was nothing more than a self-governing dominion given to an Earl.

Rather than a king from the definition of a country's top leader, the humans and High-Elves were the only ones in the Avalon Continent with kingdoms true to the meaning of the word.

Because of that, they proclaimed themselves as High-Elves, noble Elves.

Humans did not question them in particular and just called them High-Elves.

However, despite being mixed with human blood, the Half-Elves, descendants of the once legitimate conqueror of the Avalon Continent, the Wood-Elves; and the Wild-Elves whom lineage can be traced back to the lost civilization of Ancient-Elves, apparently refer to them as Avant-Elves (City-Elves).

During the Wood-Elf era, they used to be called Gray-Elves due to the color of their hair.

Well, I just call them High-Elves like normal.

I am human after all and they would usually be put in a bad mood if they were called Avant-Elves.

The High-Elves fundamentally don't put up a front. They always spoke whatever was in their heart.

If the mood turned sour, they would outright claim without mercy that the words you said hurt them so they were, in a sense, hard to get along with but also easy to get along with.

Of course, there were individual differences.

There probably were High-Elves that do not reveal their true feelings.

They only don't put up a public face because they don't like to but when they actually do, they could use it a lot more cunningly compared to humans.

The Knight Squad Captain always grumbled that the royal family of Kiramine could not be trusted.

“Radish and beef tendon, egg, hanpen. Beer as well.” (TLN: *Hanpen* = *white triangle fish/meat paste*)

The gatekeeper ordered by pointing at the ingredients floating inside the square pot.

“Then, I’ll get radish and wiener, ah and chikuwa. And a cup of beer.” (TLN: *Chikuwa* = *cylindrical fish paste with a hollow center*)

“Sure thing!”

Oparara answered spiritedly with the bell-like voice of High-Elves.

She placed the ingredients in wooden containers with experienced hand movements.

“Now that I think about it ...”

When she passed the container to me, she seemed to have remembered when she saw the medicinal grass bag that I placed on the floor so Oparara asked me.

“Red, are you no longer selling mustard?”

Even though it was Red-san all along until he opened the food stand, I guess that could be attributed to the fastidiousness of High-Elves as she even mimicked the way the old man called me.

“Yeah~ It’s because I don’t go to the mountain often now compared to before. I only gather enough spices for my own use.”

“That’s a pity. The supply in town is not stable.”

The market price of mustard at the trading post was 5 Peryl for one kilogram.

It would become even more expensive after it passes through the trading post to the market.

It went well with oden but it was naturally chargeable.

So the gatekeeper and I put up with the lack of it.

However, a young girl appeared.

“Welcome.”

“Daikon, beef tendon, egg, four chikuwa, and mustard.”

“Coming up!”

After picking up an ingredient, the young girl liberally dunked it into the small dish which had the mustard in it.

That eating style was the Oden King Style where she would order a second helping of mustard once it became thin!

Amazing!

Ordering four chikuwa was amazing too.

She probably loved chikuwa a lot.

Leaving that aside, that was the first time I’ve seen her.

She was short but her body was well trained.

Her clothes were worn from travel but they had good quality.

She had a short sword on her waist. Inside her clothes, she had three throwing knives on her flank.

The short sword had Strengthening Magic and some other special effect. And there was concealment magic to conceal all that.

A chainmail made of Mithril Silver was sewn into the inside of her clothes.

It was equipment that emphasized practicality. And she intentionally made them seem like regular items to keep a low profile.

That child had amazing skill. She should be an Adventurer used to traveling ... but her presence was thin.

She probably had a job that required her to not be noticed.

Thief, Spy ... or was it Assassin?

That was when the young girl suddenly turned toward me.

“Is there something?”

“Ah, sorry. I was curious as I had never seen you before. And you seemed to intend to ask for more mustard.”

“Mustard is required for oden.”

“I want to earn enough to be able to say that too.”

I was just glancing at her from the corner of my eye but that child noticed that my attention was on her huh?

She’s quite strong.

Who exactly is she?

Chapter 52: The assassin warns of the True Hero

“You’re the girl from yesterday!”

The gatekeeper cried out after seeing the young girl’s face.

“You know her?”

“Red! You’ll be surprised to hear that her companion dragged, with only one hand, a fat frog that was hibernating in the mud near the castle walls and defeated it using martial arts I had never seen before with a worn-out goblin blade!”

The girl’s cheeks twitched subtly.

That seemed to be a topic that she didn’t want to touch on.

However, the movement of her expressions was inconspicuous so the gatekeeper did not notice.

“That older girl, what was her name, Ru ... Ruti?”

“Ruru.”

I thought she would ignore him but she corrected him, maybe because she disliked that he was mistaking her companion’s name.

“Oh, right, Ruru! Traveler-san, Tifa right if I remember correctly. If you plan to stay in Zoltan for the long term, you can head over to the Adventurers Guild, we’re always short on skilled adventurers and that fat frog too, I put in a request asking for the removal of it as it would be dangerous after its hibernation but nobody accepted it at all.”

The Greater Giant Frog was a surprisingly troublesome monster despite how it looked.

It would use its tongue to capture its opponents and although it seems slimy, the razor-sharp frog teeth can easily chew through chainmail and even if it failed to chew through your armor, it had the troubling habit of swallowing you first.

It was not an opponent that D-rank adventurers could face. A party of C-rank adventurers attacking it together would not be able to let their guard down either. That was the kind of opponent it was.

By defeating that Greater Giant Frog alone, that Traveler Ruru should possess an ability in the upper C-rank or around B-rank.

The girl called Tifa glanced at the gatekeeper who was speaking incessantly.

“Hey, leave it at that. You’re troubling the traveler.”

“Eh, really?”

“Yeah, that child came here to eat oden alone.”

Tifa nodded slightly.

The gatekeeper scratched his head awkwardly.

“Sorry, I got a little excited.”

“It’s okay, excuse me, I would like to take the remainder home, is that all right?”

Tifa said as she stood up, took the remainders from Oparara after ordering an additional chikuwa and konjac jelly and left.

“See, you made her angry.”

I said as I finished the remaining beer in my cup.

“Well then, I’ll be leaving too.”

“Eh — keep me company for another cup and comfort me for having angered the traveler.”

“Don’t want to.”

“Geh — Oparara! I’ll have a chikuwa too!”

“Ah, please wrap chikuwa, radish and chicken meat for me, I’m bringing it back for Lit.”

I placed one Quarter Peryl silver coin and a couple common copper coins on the counter as payment.

Tise was wary of being tailed so she detoured a couple of times before returning to her inn at the harbor.

“What happened?”

Ruti asked after noticing Tise’s condition.

“Hero-sama, please be careful. To be honest, I was looking down on the remote region but there seems to be a troublesome opponent in Zoltan too.”

“Troublesome opponent?”

“A young man. We only talked for a short time but he noticed my gear and knives.”

Tise said as she pointed at the Mithril Silver weaved into her clothes and the knives she concealed.

Her equipment was calculated to not make even the sound of a pin drop no matter how violently she moved about.

Not to mention mediocre opponents, Tise was confident that even those who possess the Divine Protection of Investigator and Detective would probably not notice.

“However, he saw through me. He also had ability, probably close to my equivalent. I don’t think I will be able to win if we fought in a situation where he had the advantage. Of course, it would be different for Hero-sama.”

Although she paled in comparison to the Hero, Tise was chosen by Ares as the strongest in the Assassin Guild.

Tise would not humble herself in such comparisons. That was purely her judgment.

Above all that, Tise judged that the man could be the strongest opponent she has ever faced.

“A person like that shouldn’t be living unaffiliated and in obscurity. He might be the strongest adventurer in Zoltan.”

“But at the tavern, they mentioned that the strongest person in Zoltan right now was the B-rank Byuui.”

“That is probably the public image. I sensed some kind of dignity from that man’s bearing. Maybe ... he used to conduct himself with official Knight Order etiquettes.”

“Knight Order.”

The face of a person Ruti knew very well appeared in her head.

However, there were plenty of Knights in the world. The person she met yesterday on the bridge who she couldn’t really remember was a Knight too. Ruti denied her own thoughts.

Tise continued talking without noticing that.

“A former Knight and a veteran warrior who fought at the frontlines against the Demon Lord Army. I feel that a person like that could only end up in the remote border if he did something dishonorable. It would generally be ignored if adventurers had some dishonor to their name but a Knight would implicate his entire Knight Order.”

“I see.”

“Although I do not know what it was ...”

Tise pondered a little.

“This is nothing more than speculation but perhaps he was alienated by his superior because he was young and excellent and he had no choice but to kill him. I can’t imagine a person with such skills to flee here because of a simple loss.”

“I see.”

Tise took off the short sword that she had suspended on her belt.

She sat on the bed and sighed deeply.

“Zoltan does not have any decent adventurer. The strongest adventurer was only B-rank. I found it weird how they were able to subjugate a Senior-rank Demon.”

Tise heard a little about the incidents that occurred in Zoltan from Ares who had questioned Albert.

A senior-rank demon and B-rank adventurer colluded and it was stopped by a skilled adventurer.

However, according to the information she gathered in Zoltan yesterday and today, it was a traveling adventurer and the Guards who settled the incident. That adventurer was apparently also currently recorded as B-rank.

“Those are information for the masses. The true hero is probably that man. Now that I think about it, getting along with the gatekeeper was probably so that he could gather information on the people who visit the town. He stood up immediately after I stood up as well so he was wary of me. Only drinking a cup instead of a jug meant that he was vigilant on a regular basis and could naturally act at any time. With an attitude that everywhere is a battlefield, no interest in fame and only holds pride in his silent accomplishments, a true hero.”

Tise reflected on her actions.

She was naive to think that the only trouble in this journey would be covering up for the Hero.

A Hero's journey would not be so simple, even in the remote border Zoltan, huge obstacles would stand in the Hero's path.

“Hero-sama, we must decide on our policy.”

“Policy?”

“To cooperate with that man or to oppose him. If he was a Knight and a brave warrior, I feel that his beliefs should be similar to ours.”

“That would be difficult. The Alchemist I seek seems to be in the prison ward.”

“Prison?”

Ruti seemed to have gathered information too.

Tise was worried if Ruti had caused any disturbances but judging by how she didn't say anything, probably nothing happened. The Hero had done information gathering herself since before.

Although it was through tapping the shoulders and more of intimidation rather than negotiation ...

Ruti heard from the Contract Demon that an Alchemist who was the close aide of Big Hawk produced the medicine. However, after drinking the medicine, the Contract Demon refused to say a word so she could only get the Alchemist's name and physique in the end ...

All of Big Hawk's close aides were confined in the prison and she found information that corresponded to the Alchemist and that he was under medical treatment in the prison ward for the slash on his shoulder during the riot.

"As long as I conceal the fact that I am the Hero, it would be impossible to take the Alchemist away through negotiations."

"I see ... then it will be a prison break huh?"

"Yes."

"We will be antagonizing the entire town. And that man."

"Shall I meet that man directly?"

Meet and defeat.

Tise determined that was what she was implying.

" ... Of course, Hero-sama would not lose. That would be impossible but that man has probably also considered the situation where he is defeated. It would be dangerous to meet him without investigating his background."

"I see."

The Hero nodded while tilting her head slightly.

It would be unfair to blame Tise for being over-vigilant.

Tise, who as an Assassin, had seen many ambitious individuals and conspirators and could never imagine with her common sense that a person with ability close to hers would actually aim for a leisurely slow life.

The two of them discussed their future plans late into the night.

At that time, Ugeuge-san was sleeping with its legs folded down in Tise's pouch.

Chapter 53: Red and Lit enjoys a peaceful day

Morning.

Getting out of bed gets tough once it turns to winter.

However, time would not wait for me so I mustered myself to jump out of the blanket and stood up.

“Morning.”

Surprisingly, Lit was awake before me.

She seemed to have been taking care of the medicinal grass in the garden in the cold air.

Her fingers had turned white so I wrapped my hands around hers.

They had become completely cold.

“So warm.”

Lit sat beside me and smiled.



Lit helped me a lot.

Although she did not have the Compounding skill, she could easily make others have a good impression of her due to her Charisma skill and she played an important role in promoting the growth of the medicinal grass in the garden and chasing away the harmful pest through her Spirit Magic.

She received etiquette training as a princess and also interacted with all kinds of people in town by slipping out of the castle. Lit could take the most optimal attitude to interact with a customer.

As a first-rate adventurer, Lit's knowledge of medicine was even better than that of people working in other apothecaries. As a party that actually uses the medicine, she could also explain the side effects that were not well known or what happens when people with various resistance skills take them.

Adventurers living in the north ward who believe in Hero Lit's advice coming from her experience actually go out of their way to come to our shop to purchase medicine.

By teaching Al 'the anticipated rookie' the sword, Lit's reputation was rising even further.

After Al went to register in the Adventurers Guild, he was apparently confronted by ill-bred senior adventurers who benefited from Big Hawk's requests but he utilized his small body to lead them to a narrow alleyway and defeated them with just a single bladeless training shotel.

Although there were differences in the grade between the Divine Protection of 『Weapon Master』 and that of 『Warrior』, by defeating opponents with higher divine protection level than he had, Al showed promising future prospects and rumors went around that the one who taught Al the sword, the Hero Lit, was amazing as expected.

During times when there were no customers, many adventurers and Guards often came seeking her advice while they bought medicine.

After just listening to them, the advice she gave which only relied on her knowledge and judgment was well received too.

My original plan was that it would be fine as long as I could secure an income enough to live my life and I did not have a burning desire to become wealthy but I was still glad that the sales were increasing.

The painting that Lit brought over seemed to receive praise as well.

There were offers coming from nobles of the central ward to purchase it at quite a sum. Of course, they were rejected.

Maybe that became a reputation as people who seem to live in the central ward, customers wearing countless layers of clothes came to purchase medicine too.

The new analgesic medicine seemed to have raised our reputation as well.

Due to the notoriety of the 'Devil's Divine Protection', knowledge regarding the dependency of analgesic drugs became greater so that became a tailwind

for my medicine.

Yesterday, I received a report from Lit that the ones I prepared in the storeroom had completely been sold out so I was planning to compound another batch.

Our sales had risen to about five times that of when I first opened the shop.

The medicinal grass I gathered from the mountain yesterday might disappear relatively quickly too.

Lit suggested yesterday to form a contract with some farmer and create a medicinal grass garden.

Although there was quite some knowledge on cultivating medicinal grass, it was a lot easier to obtain medicinal grass that was growing wild in the mountain so they could be nurtured easily once we got used to it.

However, Lit mentioned that the yield per unit area would be inferior to that of vegetables so it might not match the purchase price to a certain extent.

“Even so, it would be cheaper than buying it from the Adventurers Guild huh.”

After I stopped bringing medicinal grass to the Adventurers Guild, it seemed that there was a shortage of medicinal grass.

Due to that, the prices of medicinal grass increased.

Although it seemed that adventurers could purchase them from the Adventurers Guild at the price they bought them.

I believe they would be able to gain a lot more profit if they dealt with it more shrewdly but Zoltan’s Adventurers Guild apparently didn’t have that kind of business sense.

“Welcome.”

Lit called from the shop front.

I smiled lightly and left the shop front to Lit as I concentrated on the compounding work ahead of me.



Today’s lunch was pizza.

Lit was working the shop front so I got started with cooking a little earlier.

I flattened the dough I prepared in the morning and spread tomato sauce liberally.

“I’ll give the seafood-style pizza a try.”

Zoltan was located near the mouth of the river so the distribution of marine products was flourishing too.

First, a bedding of cheese and above that, de-shelled clams, sausages and round slices of tomato.

And another layer of cheese above that.

While the pizza was baking, I scraped potatoes that I received from the farmers to make a thick potato soup. It would be the base for a bouillon soup with minced meat and vegetables that I make on a regular basis.

I seasoned the remaining sausages with salt and grilled them on a frying pan. The golden brown sausages expanded plump from the heat. I took a bite to taste and it gave a satisfying crisp sound.

Lastly, I made a salad using tomato and lettuce.

It was easy as all I had to do was cut them.

Opening the oven and taking the pizza out, I saw that the golden brown cheese had melted properly and the fragrant scent of cheese and clams spread throughout the kitchen.

I sprinkled some chopped parsley on the baked pizza and served it with some capsicum-base seasoning in a small dish.

Lit came right when I finished cooking.

“Looks delicious! I’ll bring it to the living room.”

“Thanks.”

Lit skillfully arranged the cooked dishes.

She was already used to it.

“”Thank you for the food.””

Lit took one slice of the pizza that had been cut into 8 slices and bit down on it.

Looking at Lit smile deliciously while holding her cheek, I made a small victory pose today as well.



“Oh, right.”

Lit said after our meal as we were drinking herb tea.

“This morning, there was a prison break.”

“Prison break?”

“Yup, a Guard who came to the shop to buy medicine told me about it.”

“Hmm, that’s rare. Have they caught them?”

“It was a pretty big incident as they used some kind of quiet special explosive that blew the prison wall off.”

“What?”

That’s huge.

“Hmm, Big Hawk’s contacts? I thought that the Thieves Guild was happy to have gotten rid of him but I guess Big Hawk’s faction was bigger than expected. Looks like the successor is going strong even without Big Hawk. The town’s public security would become worse if it became a huge prison break.”

“That’s the thing, it doesn’t seem to be the case.”

“What do you mean?”

“The exploded wall was the inner wall of the prison and seemed to have been planned to match with breakfast. Quite a few inmates tried to flee but the outer walls were still intact so none of them escaped in the end.”

“That’s strange.”

“There were prisoners who attempted to scale the outer wall or those who took the guards as hostages but they were suppressed in the end. Ultimately, there was only one escapee.”

I see, a diversion huh?

The plan was most likely to break that person out of prison from the beginning.

“But I don’t understand. Was there such an important person in prison?”

“The escapee was the guy Red injured and was recuperating in the prison ward. That Alchemist who kidnapped Al.”

“Ah, that guy ...”

The small man who used sticky bombs as a weapon.

He was a high-level Alchemist despite his appearances and an opponent that indirectly led Lit into a corner through his live sacrifice bomb.

It might be dangerous if he was left to his own devices.

Well, he was wounded so he should need quite some time as Cure can only seal the surface wound. I don’t think he would be able to move much for a while.

“It would be great if he’s captured soon.”

“Yeah.”

We finished our conversation and Lit stood up to returned to the shop front after her break and I stood up to move to the workroom.

Even though we were going to be in the same building and only be separated by a couple of meters, Lit was reluctant to part so I hugged her and kissed her cheek lightly.

Chapter 54: The story begins here

Turning back time a little.

Morning. Ruti and Tise were walking in the north ward.

The cold air in the morning caused their breaths to turn white.

“If we’re going to break him out of prison, there should be magic countermeasures in place. Invisibility cloaks probably won’t work.”

Illusion Magic which would make a person invisible would be the first to have countermeasures set up for.

It would be difficult to dispel every single spell but countermeasures were possible using local budgets if they stuck to specific magic systems.

“The plan will be according to what we have discussed.”

Ruti said softly.

Tise revised her impression of the Hero.

She was certainly lacking common sense but she was by no means reckless.

Ruti investigated the prisoner’s daily schedule yesterday and gathered materials such that they could judge when was the best time to infiltrate.

The result of their discussion was to take the strategy with the highest rate of success by doing it flashily but minimizing the damage.

Unlike the stone wall that surrounded Zoltan, the outer brick wall of the prison was sufficiently tall and there were sharp spikes on top of the walls too.

Without the ‘Leap Mastery’ skill possessed by Divine Protections such as 『Roof Walker』 or 『Flying Dragon Knight』, it would probably be difficult to climb over the wall.

Ruti drew her goblin blade that had holes opened in it.

“Martial Art, Rock Slicer.”

With a swing of Ruti’s sword, the wall was shredded smoothly without any

resistance.

The two of them passed through the square hole that was hollowed out.

And after passing through, they fitted the hollowed out section of the wall back into its original spot.

Due to the extreme sharpness achieved by the martial art, it fit perfectly without any gaps to the point that nobody would notice the cut without investigating it closely.

In addition, it took them less than a second from approaching the wall to slicing through it and infiltrating.

By the time the prison guard on the watchtower, who found keeping watch a troublesome task, looked over, the two of them had already slipped into the shadows.



The bell for breakfast rang inside the prison.

The inmates lined up beside the table and muttered prayers before their meal following the words of the guard.

The sound of a slam rang out.

The guard frowned but didn't say a word.

"Geh, shitty insect."

It was the sound of a skin-head inmate stomping on a large beetle that was crawling on the floor.

The body fluid of the insect stuck to the barefoot of the man when he raised his foot.

The inmate with a burn scar on his cheek scowled and spat on the floor.

The middle-aged official, who was sent there for corruption, standing opposite them clicked his tongue loudly as he was fed up with the unsanitary and ill-mannered actions of the inmates.

"What was that?"

The skin-head who crushed the insect threatened him.

Although the middle-aged inmate was an official, he had the Divine Protection of 『Grappler』.

He stained his hands with corruption because he had given up on his career as his Divine Protection did not match working as an official.

As he could not dispel the frustration from the impulses of his Divine Protection while doing regular work, he went on Goblin hunting on his off days so his Divine Protection level was quite high.

He was confident that he could keep pace with unlawful opponents in unarmed fights.

In comparison, the skin-head inmate's Divine Protection was 『Bar Brawler』.

He was a regular at the prison and have been imprisoned many times for violent incidents.

His latest trial ended in a single minute and his sentence was decided without him saying a single word.

He had accepted that he was such a person and continued to pass day-by-day as a helper for fights or by shaking people down.

It was not a life that a person could be proud of but because of that, he had a personality that could not endure others looking down on his physical strength.

The man with a burn scar on his cheek standing beside the skin-head inmate was a laborer who possessed the Divine Protection of 『Warrior』.

He stabbed a person during a trivial fight and unfortunately, that man died. He had already spent a year in prison.

The incident which caused him to come here was not related to his Divine Protection at all.

However, he only felt regret whenever he saw the ridiculous behavior of the inmates.

All three of them had a completely different set of values and Divine Protections.

In the end, the skin-head inmate leaped onto the table and the middle-aged inmate raised both his hands.

Suddenly, there was a loud explosion.

The three inmates looked toward the origin of the sound with their mouths wide open.

Somebody among the three shouted. Later, when they were asked who shouted, they would all say that they don't know.

At that moment, the three inmates with completely different values and Divine Protections had the exact same thought.

“Outside!”

There was a large hole blown into the wall of the dining hall.

By the time the guard turned to look, the inmates were all swarming toward the hole in the wall, striving to be the first to reach it.



It was a misunderstanding by the guards and inmates who thought they heard an explosion.

It was Ruti's fist that broke the wall.

It was just that the sound of humanity's strongest fist hitting the wall sounded exactly like an explosion.

By the time the inmates were rushing toward the hole, Ruti was no longer anywhere to be seen.



The intruder boldly walked down the corridor of the hospital annex.

But nobody noticed them.

The intruder walked around the hospital annex without using any magic but nobody questioned them as they memorized the position of the personnel.

After roughly looking around, the intruder climb up to the window barred with iron bars and slipped between the 'gaps' of the iron bars.

“Welcome back, Ugeuge-san.”

Tise smiled gently after seeing her partner return.

Ugeuge-san waved one leg in response.

It hopped up onto Tise’s arm and Tise activated the ‘Spider Empathy’ skill to establish thought communication.

Spiders do not understand words and letters so all Tise could sense were vague images.

However, Tise had trained and studied on her own to understand it.

“Okay, I got it. Thank you, Ugeuge-san.”

Have a safe trip, Ugeuge-san raised both its front legs as if signifying that.



The guards came out in full force to respond to the chaos from the prison break attempt.

Only a single person remained at the entrance to the hospital annex and that person was already made unconscious by Tise’s blow to his vital point.

“Skill: Decoy”

When Tise activated her skill, a person with the exact same appearance as the unconscious guard appeared in front of Tise’s eyes.

Decoy was a skill used to create a split body of the user’s own body or a person they touched.

The split body could not move independently nor make any sound but it could be given simple orders like to pace around a certain range or nod if something was said to it.

Split bodies were like balloons with no contents so they had no combat ability at all but it was an ability that belonged to the summoning system rather than the illusion system. Thus, it could not be detected via anti-illusion magic countermeasures.

From experience, Tise knew that the decoy could buy a lot more time than expected of its physically weak split body.

From then on, it was a race against time.

The guards only realized that the close aide of Big Hawk, the Alchemist Codwin, was missing 30 minutes after they finished suppressing the prison escape attempt.



Ruti took off the gag that was tied onto the man's mouth.

"Wh-who are you guys?"

Dragged to a dim warehouse in the harbor district, the Alchemist Codwin held onto his wound that hurt from being moved and he asked with a terrified voice.

The man was not bound in any way apart from his mouth but he understood that the two people there were stronger than him by far. He knew that it would not be a good idea to oppose them.

After thinking a little about the question the Alchemist asked, Ruti ...

"I want you to compound the Devil's Divine Protection."

She frankly told him her purpose.

"Devil's Divine Protection ..."

The Alchemist regained a little of his composure after knowing the goal of the two who broke him out of prison.

(I see, so they wish to make a business by selling the Devil's Divine Protection. I thought I would not be able to avoid the death sentence but it seems like there is hope for me to live.) The Devil's Divine Protection was an item that denied the belief of the Holy Church.

As the Alchemist who made them, he imagined that he would be the first to be dragged to the execution ground.

He was cornered to the point where he continued to secretly rub his wound against the bed to put up a pointless struggle to delay that day as much as possible.

(However, the Devil's Divine Protection requires demon hearts. Without Big Hawk-san, I can't make it. If they find out, my value would be lost. I have to

somehow buy time and get them to bring me to safety outside of Zoltan.) The Alchemist desperately wrecked his brain to look for a path of survival.

(The materials can no longer be acquired within Zoltan. The remaining choices are either remote lands or criminal cities where wanted posters would not reach. Right, Muzari would be good. Runaway slaves are hired as miners there so if I can get hired as an Alchemist to compound medicine for the miners, I could spend the rest of my life there.) The Alchemist's behavior showed that he was at a loss to what to say to explain that but ...

"Here."

The Alchemist's thoughts were all blown away when he saw the paper Ruti passed to him.

"Th-this is the compounding recipe for the Devil's Divine Protection!?"

The Alchemist was confused.

Why did these girls have this and why did they deliberately break him out if they knew about the compounding method?

The skills needed to compound the Devil's Divine Protection were Intermediate Alchemy Level 5 and Intermediate Compounding Level 1.

It was quite a requirement but it was not something that only Codwin was capable of.

"Wh-why ..."

His question was referring to why they had it or why did they break him out of prison but Ruti misunderstood him.

"So that I can use it."

The Alchemist could not stop his body from trembling when Ruti announced her own intention and looked down on him with cold eyes.

The man who lived in the underground society was frightened like a child.

"I-I understand, I will do whatever you say! So please stop it with those eyes!!"

The Alchemist appealed to Ruti with a wail.



“The Devil’s Divine Protection is too well known in Zoltan.”

“Yes.”

Ruti nodded to Tise’s comment.

“Even without that, we have broken that Codwin man out of prison so we should leave Zoltan as soon as possible. Let’s leave tonight.”

They had tied Codwin up with rope and hid him in a large crate located in the warehouse.

The Alchemist was obedient and didn’t show any intent to resist.

“Understood.”

Ruti had no objection to leaving Zoltan.

The next destination would be the city where the celebration was held for their subjugation of Desmond of the Earth.

” ... I will surely find you.”

Ruti muttered decisively with a soft voice but a serious expression.

Just that alone had enough intimidation to cause Tise to give a quiet shriek.

“We’re here, the people at the harbor district inn mentioned that this place has the best selection of products.”

“Can’t we heal him with Hands of Healing?”

“No, Ruru-san is the only person with the Hands of Healing skill.”

If they intend to conceal their identities, it would be better to not let the captured Alchemist know that Ruti was the Hero as well.

In addition, once they leave Zoltan, they would probably find a Healer who could use the ‘Regenerate’ spell which could heal the wound even after some time has passed.

It would cost quite a sum to have such a high-level spell cast but it was not an issue with the Hero’s financial strength.

“Let us stick to first aid measures using analgesic and cure potions until we

leave Zoltan.”

Cure Potions could only stop the bleeding from an open wound but that would be enough for now.

It would be fine as long as the Alchemist did not die.

That was when the two of them arrived at the 『Red and Lit Apothecary』 to purchase medicine.

The door chimed when Tise opened it.

It was an Apothecary in Downtown so she had imagined a small dirty store but the interior of the shop was a lot cleaner than she had expected.

All kinds of medicine were on display on the shelves on the walls.

There were containers of miasma-repelling herbs placed here and there so there was also a slightly refreshing scent inside the shop.

There were a number of artistic drawings on the shop walls and there was a statue of a winged angel with compassionate eyes in the center of the room. Tise could not understand art but the paintings made using gentle colors and the angel statue caused her heart to relax.

Apparently, they had to request Magic Potions like Cure Potions from the shop attendant directly. The item list placed beside the statue was quite thick so it seemed that it was true that the place had a good assortment of items.

The shop attendant was a man. He was talking to a Half-Elf man as he arranged the medicine.

“That person is!?”

Tise felt her breath freeze as that man was the skilled adventurer she met at the oden stall.

Tise tried to warn Ruti but ...

“Onii-chan!!!!”

“Ruti!?”

The scene Tise saw at that moment was enough to crush the figure of the Hero Ruti she had in her mind until that point to pieces.

With teary eyes but a radiant smile on her face, Ruti opened both her arms to hug that man.

The man caught the leaping Ruti even though he was surprised.

“I wanted to meet you! I missed you for a long time!!”

Standing there was not the Hero with tense aura which Tise felt until now.

In the man's arms was a smiling and crying Ruti, just a regular young girl.

Chapter 55: Swallowed by a bitter vortex

My younger sister was in my arms.

My younger sister who I thought that I might perhaps never see again or at least until she defeated the Demon Lord.

“Onii-chan!”

Ruti squeezed with her arms that were wrapped around my back.

Ruti was smiling, smiling while crying.

Gonz who was beside me and the Chikuwa-loving child who entered with Ruti were shocked stiff with their mouths wide open.

I have to say something ...

First, I tightly hugged Ruti back.

I was happy to be reunited with my younger sister too. From the bottom of my heart.

After a while, once Ruti had finally calmed down, I softly squeezed Ruti's shoulder and she obediently separated from me.

Her expression had returned to her usual expression too.

She was smiling even now but those who did not know Ruti would probably see it as an expressionless look.

“Onii-chan ... you're wrong.”

” ... ? What are you referring to?”

“I do not feel anything for Ares.”

Was she referring to the time when Ares hugged her when I left?

“Really? I was sure that ...”

“No.”

Ruti denied it with a strong tone which she rarely used with me.

That was Ruti's way of expressing her denial where there was no room for discussion so I honestly gave in.

"All right all right, it seems that I was mistaken."

"Yes."

Ruti corrected me sadly. I see, so she did not have such a relationship with Ares ...

While I was partially happy, I was also sad as it meant that Ruti did not have anybody to rely on in the end.

... I guess it was about time I explained to those around us.

But how should I explain it?

"Onii-chan so that girl is Red's younger sister?"

"Onii-chan so the person in front of me is Gideon-san?"

"Gideon?"

"Red?"

Gonz and Chikuwa-loving girl both tilted their heads in confusion.

Hah, how should I explain this?



Lit was out buying dinner.

I will have to explain all kinds of matters to Ruti before she returned.

At the same time, I had to explain to Gonz as well.

Gonz was not exactly a tight-lipped person but he was still a person who could distinguish what not to speak about.

"Hmm."

I'll close the shop for a time.

After all, I could not manage the shop in this situation.

"Er, firstly, Gonz."

"Yeah."

“This child is my younger sister. But please do not tell those around us for now. I’ll explain to you properly another day so it would help me if you quietly went home for today.”

“Sure, I don’t really get what is going on but I can certainly tell that you both like each other.”

Gonz grinned.

“Younger sisters are good.”

Gonz had Nao too, his younger sister.

The two of them got along well and he treats her husband Mido and their son Tanta like his own family.

Gonz stood up straight and pat my shoulder.

Then,

“Erm, younger sister-san. Red ... or perhaps your real name is Gideon? I don’t know your circumstances but this guy is a great and reliable guy for this Zoltan’s Downtown district. He has not done anything bad so you can relax.”

“Okay.”

Ruti nodded.

However, it seemed to me that there was a shadow on her expression.



In the living room were me, Ruti, Chikuwa-loving girl ... she was apparently called Tise, an Assassin that replaced me by Ares’ recommendation.

I felt that my role and that of an Assassin was quite far apart though.

“Ah — where should I start?”

“Onii-chan?”

“What is it?”

“Who is living with you?”

Ruti asked after taking a look around the room.

Ugh, she noticed even before I explained huh?

There wasn't anything in the room that indicated Lit's presence.

However, she probably realized that another person apart from me lived in this house from the arranged flower and flower pot as well as the sense of dishware.

I was a little nervous revealing it to my younger sister.

"I have someone I live together with."

"... I see."

"She'll probably be back soon but you remember that shotel-wielding princess-sama Lislet who acted with us in Logavia?"

"That person huh?"

Ruti said a little sadly.

I guess it was really my mistake to think that she liked Ares instead of me.

Since we traveled together ... no, since we were young, Ruti only had eyes for me.

"In any case, tell me the truth as to what happened to lead to this. I believe I asked Ares to say that I left the party to do scouting because I felt it was hard for me to fight."

"After that, Yarandorara started claiming that Ares killed Onii-chan even though he claimed that Onii-chan ran away."

That Ares bastard, he didn't keep his promise huh?

Although it might not be my place to complain after I had left the party.

I told them my circumstances where I was told by Ares that I was a hindrance to the party and to leave the party, fell into despair, ended up in Zoltan, opened an Apothecary and ended up living together with Lit.

"I intend to live like this together with Lit. I plan to eventually marry her."

I was a little nervous to clearly speak the word marriage.

Lit was a princess while I was a Knight with nothing more than a single

generation of peerage.

It was not quite a case where our standings matched but ... Lit and I were both prepared to abandon our social standings.

“I see.”

My expressions probably told Ruti that I was serious. Ruti did not say anything about the difference in pedigree and just quietly nodded.

“I’m sorry for leaving without telling you.”

” ... It was Ares who was wrong. But.”

Ruti looked at me directly.

“I will silence Ares. So, is it all right?”

” ... ”

“Lit can come along too. Onii-chan, let’s journey together again.”

Ruti said as if she was begging me.

Pain ran through my heart.

I ... thought that there were others Ruti could rely on apart from me.

Ares, Danan, Theodora, Yarandorara.

They all had their weaknesses but they were stronger than me and were her companions who mastered their respective paths.

Even without me, Ares’ magic, Danan’s fists, Theodora’s spear and miracles, Yarandorara’s power to manipulate plants ... I thought that they would be able to support Ruti.

“The party can’t hold without Onii-chan. I can even expel Ares. We need Onii-chan.”

Ruti explained the current situation of the party.

That Ares failed to accomplish my work on his own.

Danan left to look for me, Yarandorara left the party thinking I was murdered.

Tise entered the party to replace me but having one to replace three did not

add up.

” ”

They defeated the Wind of the Four Heavenly Kings so I thought that the Hero party was doing well.

However, the Hero's journey was not going favorably at all.

Just like the misgivings Lit had, huge issues surfaced after I left.

If I wish to return, I still had a place in the Hero party.

I could return to my days of adventuring once again if I wished for it.

However, even so ... despite all that, I.

“Sorry, Ruti. I have already found my meaning in staying here.”

Not just Lit, this shop, this daily life have become my purpose in life.

This Zoltan ... had already become my home.

“I see.”

Ruti quietly answered, having seemed to had a hunch midway through.

Then.

“In that case, I'll live in this city too.”

My beloved younger sister said with the determination to abandon her adventure as I did.

Selfish words that carried with it the meaning of escaping from the war which determines the fate of the world.

However, I wonder if anybody could condemn those words.

Today will probably be a long day.

What should I say? What can I say?

My thoughts were swallowed by a bitter vortex.

But I did not feel that it was painful.

Because in front of my eyes was my beloved younger sister, a young girl who endured unbearable sorrow with an expressionless face.

Chapter 56: A proper Hero

Lit came home immediately following that conversation and was placing her groceries down.

“I’m home~! Red isn’t here? The shop is closed too.”

I hurriedly ran to the shop.

“I’m here~ I was in the living room ... some guests came by.”

“Guests?”

There was a soft footstep.

Somebody was probably peeping their face out from the door behind me.

I couldn’t see behind me but ...

The groceries fell to the floor with a thud.

Lit froze and was too shocked to say a word.

“Ah~, yup, my younger sister came by.”

Even if I couldn’t see behind me, I could easily guess who was behind me by looking at Lit’s expression.

“It’s been a long time.”

Ruti greeted Lit with a soft voice.



The sound of a soft clink echoed.

It was the sound of me placing a cup of coffee on the table.

The room was currently so quiet that such a soft sound could echo in the room.

(The atmosphere is bad.)

Lit and Ruti were both focusing on the cups in their hands and were not

looking in front.

Tise was staring at the jumping spider on the back of her hand.

The jumping spider was looking around restlessly and somehow seemed to be acting like it was worried about Tise.

“Ah, Ruti. Where are you staying?”

“An inn in the harbor district.”

“Harbor district huh? Aren’t the inns in the central ward or north ward better in quality?”

“It’s all right.”

“I see ... but what do you plan to do? Will you be sleeping here today?”

Ruti’s expression instantly lit up but she immediately lowered her head.

“No, I still have something to do in the harbor district ... but, I would like to be together after I am done with that task.”

“Sure.”

A task huh ...

“I have not asked, why did you come to Zoltan?”

“One reason was to look for Onii-chan.”

“Me ... ?”

“Because Onii-chan is needed to subjugate the Demon Lord.”

Hmm ... when we first met, when she announced that she would live here ... and her reason which was to look for me, all of them felt a little out of place.

“Another reason was to look for a person.”

“A person?”

“An intellectual who was hiding in Zoltan. He possesses the knowledge necessary for the subjugation of the Demon Lord. But we have already found him so that is done.”

“I see.”

“Erm!”

Lit who had been keeping silent all this while called out.

“Red ... what will you do?”

Right, I had not told Lit yet.

“I will stay here. And run this shop together with Lit.”

“Really? ... But.”

Lit glanced at Ruti who was showing a sorrowful expression.

“Lit, you don’t have to worry. I too ... will live in this town.”

“E-eh!?”

“We have to return for tonight.”

“Return ...”

Ruti stood up.

Strange, the strong sense of discomfort that I have been feeling since a while ago was still there.

I believe whatever that was happening to Ruti’s body was not absolutely bad ... but it was not entirely good either.

“Onii-chan.”

“Come by anytime. I will be in this shop.”

“I was about to ask that.”

Ruti lowered her head slightly.

I gently rubbed her head.

“Hn ...”

“I have not talked to you enough. We both have a lot to catch up on after I left.”

“That’s right, but this is enough for today ...”

Ruti looked directly at me ... and smiled happily once again.

“But it is all right, after all, I have a ton of time after this.”

Lit who was beside me was surprised to see Ruti’s smile.



Ruti left plainly.

Lit and I sat at the table and pondered intently.

“Hey, Red. Is it really all right?”

“What is?”

“That ... I find it strange to say it but ... Ruti needs you.”

“You’re right.”

“In that case, I kind of think it would be better ... if you went with her.”

Lit’s expression seemed like she was suffering.

“For the sake of the world huh ...”

To be honest, I can’t say that my heart was not wavering.

Recalling Ruti’s sorrowful expression certainly made a part of me hesitate.

“Let’s sit down and talk again, me, Ruti, Lit, and Tise, the four of us.”

“Okay.”

It was not an issue that could be resolved immediately.

We needed time.

Some people might accuse us of delaying the Hero.

But if that was a crime, the blame was on me. Ruti had not done anything wrong.

After all, even if the fate of the world rested on those shoulders, Ruti was still only a 17-year-old young girl.



After leaving the shop, Ruti quickly left the location and groaned while holding her chest.

“Yu, Ruru-san!?”

Tise rush over in a hurry.

Ruti took out the Devil’s Divine Protection from her chest pocket and drank a mouthful.

“I shouldn’t have said that I would remain in this town.”

Ruti softly muttered as cold sweats appeared on her forehead.

Ruti was currently suffering an attack from the fierce impulses of her Divine Protection.

Even though the impulses should have been weakened by the Devil’s Divine Protection, when the Hero stated her desire to abandon the very role of a Hero, the world strongest Divine Protection, the desire to pursue justice protested with pain that could crush a person’s heart.

“It has not weakened yet.”

“Ruru-san ...”

Tise was worried.

As she expected, the current Hero-sama was somewhat strange.

Tise had definitely not traveled with the Hero for a long time but her current condition was undeniably abnormal.

“Kyaaaaaa!!!”

That was they heard a scream.

Tise responded quickly.

But Ruti had rushed over even before she did.



Outside the Downtown district, at the water canal that bordered the harbor district.

A single High-Elf woman was grabbed by her hair and pull to the ground.

“Hey, who let a long-ear do business here huh?”

There was an oden stall overturned in the vicinity.

The oden ingredients that the High-Elf Oparara made with care were scattered miserably on the ground and there were two red-faced drunk men grinning as they stepped on them.

“Stop it!”

“This is a human-sama town, demi-humans like you showing your faces here would damage the aesthetic of the place.”

There were human supremacists like them in any town.

In most cases, most humans frowned at their actions but there was a sufficient number in their community so they exist in every town.

They seemed to be filled with twisted joy when they looked at the red-faced Oparara due to their beatings ...

However,

“Eh?”

It happened in the blink of the eye.

The next instant, there was a punch directly in front of him from a young girl with her legs in a wide stance.

There was no time at all for him to protect himself.

“Oge!?”

He lost the air in his lungs and following that, he was wrecked by intense pain as if his internal organs were mashed and crushed.

Ruti held herself back so as to not kill the man.

However, that was not due to mercy. She aimed to hold back just enough so that he would not lose consciousness but be in such pain that he would wish that he had died.

That single punch would probably remain as a lifelong mental trauma for that man.

The man bent over doubled and pressed against his stomach as he moaned

while his tears and drool flowed freely.

“Heee, wha-what!?”

The other man tried to escape in a hurry but Tise had already wrapped around him.

“M-move!”

Tise grabbed the man’s arm which he extended to thrust her away and she tossed him into the air with a turn.

“Ugya!!”

Pressing onto the joint of the man that crashed into the ground, Tise softly pressed her finger to the man’s side.

“U-ugaaaaaaAA!!!!!!”

He screamed so loudly that it felt like his throat would tear.

She had applied the Human Body Destruction technique.

An attack that only applied pain to the opponent without causing any injury.

“Chikuwa ... what a waste.”

Looking at the trampled chikuwa, Tise pressed a little harder with her finger.



By the time the two thugs were handed to the Guards who came rushing over after hearing the commotion, the two of them were already crying and cowering without worrying about their appearances.

“With that, they will never do it again.”

Ruti murmured when she saw the condition of the two thugs.

Tise nodded too.

“Thank you for your help.”

The Guards seemed that they were outraged by the two men’s actions so they did not say a word about Ruti and Tise’s violent actions and dragged the two men away after thanking them.

“Fuuuu.”

Tise was a little satisfied.

As an Assassin, it was rare to help others like that. It was unusual ... but it didn't feel bad.

In contrast, Ruti slumped her shoulder a little.

“Th-thank you! You saved me!”

Oparara approached them while holding a wet towel to her cheek that was punched.

Ruti placed her right hand on that cheek when she saw her face.

“Ruru-san!”

Tise warned Ruti when she realized what she was about to do.

However, Ruti activated ‘Healing Hands’ without heeding her.

“Eh!?”

Oparara released a voice of shock.

In an instant, the pain from her cheek and body disappeared and neither of the wound or the swelling from her previously red and swollen cheek remained.

“I still can't abandon the people in need.”

“Ruru-san.”

“Sorry, even though you told me not to use my skill.”

“N-no, it is all right ... I'm sure that was the right thing to do.”

That was right, that was what being a Hero meant.

Tise was convinced and a little proud that she stood alongside a person who would do the right thing.

Ruti stared at her right hand that fought against the strong and protected the weak.

The suffering she felt from her impulses until just now was resolved by helping the High-Elf. After some time passes, the Devil's Divine Protection

would kick into effect too.

She came running precisely because she knew that doing this would dispel her Divine Protection's impulses.

"I wonder if this is the right thing to do."

Ruti asked her own Divine Protection in a voice soft enough that nobody else heard it.